

Making Sense of Your E-Reader Options

Black Friday and Cyber Monday are upon us! And if you're like many people this holiday season, you're considering buying an e-reader for the first time.

There are many e-readers out there, and more cropping up all the time. Even if you've decided to go with one brand, there's still several different models to choose from. How do you sort it all out? Well, here are some ideas to help you narrow down your choices.



1. Kindle doesn't work with Overdrive.

I know people who love their Kindles, but I could never bring myself to buy one because it ties you in to buying your e-books from Amazon. Amazon is great and all, but I like to keep my options open. The most important thing to know here is that Overdrive, which is what New Hampshire libraries use to offer you free access to e-books, cannot be used with the Kindle. Not Overdrive's fault here, I'll note. Kindle just doesn't play well with others.

[Click here for more information and the link to Overdrive](#)

Why is Overdrive awesome and important? Because you can check out books for free. You have up to 2 weeks to read them, then they're made available for the next person waiting. There are new and popular titles on there. Just like if you were to walk into the library to check a print book out. Nashua Public Library and other New Hampshire libraries pay for this service, so make use of it!

A Sony reader, the Kobo, and the Nook all work with Overdrive. As should any reader that supports EPUB and can use Adobe Digital Editions.

2. Find a place to play.

The only way to get an e-reader you'll be comfortable with is to try them out. This is a new technology, so companies haven't worked out which design works best. And some designs work better for different people. Is the font size and screen size comfortable for you to read, or do you need something larger? Do you find it easier to have the buttons in the middle or off to the side? Do you want something light-weight?

Left-handed people in particular might want to be careful. Or even people who just like to switch hands while they read. Some models have the 'turn the page' button on the right-hand side. What's up with that?

You need to really pick one up, and play with it. Is it intuitive to use? Do you feel comfortable holding it and reading from it?

Borders had 4 different e-readers out for display when I was in there. You could play with them and ask questions. Naturally they did not have an Amazon Kindle or a Barnes &

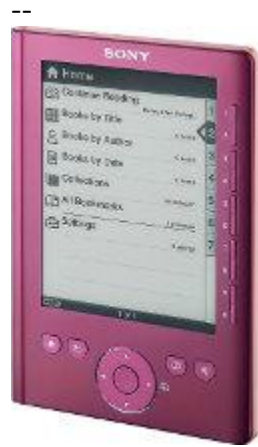
Noble Nook, but they did have a Kobo and a Sony, among others. Both of which will work with Ovedrive, no problem.

I have not been in one, but reports are that Best Buy has a bunch of different e-readers as well, including the B&N Nook.

Note I am not advocating you buy your e-reader from these locations. Just go and try them out. Then look for the best deal on the type you've decided you want.

3. Don't spend too much.

You should be able to get a good e-reader for under \$200. Unless you're sure that \$200+ model is the one you have to have, then don't go for it. Reading books off of an e-reader may not be for everyone. Make it a low investment to find out if it's a habit you'll get into. The technology is still improving, and next year or a few years down the line, you'll probably be ready to upgrade to a new model. One with color e-ink perhaps, or some awesome new feature you can't even imagine yet.



Sony Reader Pocket Edition

In case you're wondering what I have, I have a Sony reader Pocket edition. The pink one that's in the photo above. I am quite happy with it, and wouldn't trade it for anything except maybe a Sony reader that you can write on! But a friend who tried it out did not like it as much, so I have to admit it may not be for everyone.

If you're shopping for someone else, say a kid, you *may* want to tactfully, sneakily, find out if they have an e-reader preference. Or bring them into the store so you can play with the e-readers together. Or you can write them a gift certificate redeemable for one e-reader, but that's not nearly as much fun as tearing open that wrapping paper and being able to immediately play with it!

<http://www.npldocuments.org/libraryblog/2010/11/making-sense-of-your-e-reader-options/>